

Resolution. It is said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn from history.

Mrs. BONO. Mr. speaker, since coming to Washington, I have taken part in many significant and historical debates. Most of the time, Republicans and Democrats have been at odds with one another. But last week, as I and a group of my Democrat and Republican colleagues, discussed this issue with the President of the United States in the Cabinet Room of the White House, I felt a sense of purpose and bipartisanship that made me proud to serve as a Member of Congress.

To grant our President the authority to use force against the regime of Saddam Hussein as a last resort is not a vote I take lightly. However, over the course of our nation's young history, there have been many times when I wish we had been able to prevent a variety of calamities. From the assault on Pearl Harbor to the terrorist attacks of 9–11, we have been reminded time and time again that we do not live in splendid isolation.

It is for this reason we must consider taking up arms yet again to defend ourselves. While I realize the human cost of war on both sides is sobering, the cost of inaction in this case could far exceed our worst fears.

Saddam Hussein has used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. He has used them against the Iranians. There is no question in my mind that this international outlaw has a diabolical drive to acquire nuclear weapons to use against our Nation and our allies. If we do not act now, we will have put the lives of our citizens at risk and we will have failed our future generations. We will go down in history as having given up our principals out of fear. History will not forgive us.

Our World War II generation of men and women, under the leadership and strength of FDR and Churchill, fought and died to give us the freedoms we enjoy today. It is now up to us to rise to this new threat. While I believe we must work with our allies to exhaust all reasonable diplomatic means, we must also be prepared to take military action to defend our country from a tyrant who can unleash a reign of terror upon the civilized world never before seen.

Mr. Speaker, it was quite significant for so many of us with such varied backgrounds and philosophies to come together with the President in the Cabinet Room last week. We were able to prove that national security is an issue that transcends party lines and sends a signal to our aggressors that we will stand firm and united in order to protect our country and her citizens.

The world is watching us. The United States and this Congress cannot be afraid to lead and defend. We have a sacred obligation to our people and our way of life.

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, just a few short weeks ago, I believed the President's focus on unilateral U.S. action raised more questions than it answered. Chief among my concerns were issues such as international support, the existence of a clear and present danger to the United States, conditions for maximizing success and minimizing casualties, and the effect of unilateral action of Middle East stability.

I was pleased to see the President listen to these concerns, work closely with the Congress, and produce the bipartisan resolution currently under debate in the House. One

thing is clear, the strength of our Republic, our commitment to debate, democracy and freedom is as strong today as in any time in our Nation's history.

Like most Americans, I have wrestled with the question of how to neutralize the threat of Saddam Hussein. During my travels in Michigan, thousands of constituents have shared their concerns about a unilateral and full-scale American invasion of Iraq. In fact, I continue to share those very concerns.

This week, I will cast the toughest vote of my time in public service—a vote that may commit American men and women to a war against Iraq and its brutal dictator. This is a war in which lives surely will be lost. The first time I faced such a tough decision was in giving the President authority to send troops into Afghanistan to hunt down the terrorist who attacked our Nation on September 11, 2001.

As we all are learning, the face of war is changing. Formal declarations of war by our enemies are going the way of trench warfare and cavalry charges—relics of a different era. The resolution currently before Congress reflects that changing reality.

Today's enemies do not distinguish between civilian and military targets. Today's enemies are just as likely to use chemical and biological weapons as bullets and bombs. These are the very real threats posed by modern enemies that do not allow us to wait for an attack of catastrophic proportions.

Going to war, however, requires more than recognizing the threat. It is the immediacy of these threats that pose a clear and present danger to U.S. citizens. This was underscored in my recent briefings at the White House with National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, CIA Director George Tenet, and other military intelligence and foreign policy experts. Their information, some of it classified, reinforced the very real threat Saddam poses with nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and his willingness to use them. Even against the United States.

A great deal of soul searching has gone into the process that began with talk about the U.S. attacking Iraq and has now come to an agreement on four very important points:

(1) Multilateral Action. Last month, after returning from a Middle East trip, it was absolutely clear that Saddam's neighbors who know him best, fear him deeply and would shed few tears if he were removed from power. However, the region's leaders, especially Saudi Arabia, were concerned about the fragile future of the Middle East. They want Saddam removed, but through a strong alliance, not one-on-one, America versus Saddam. This bipartisan congressional resolution authorizes President Bush to "obtain prompt and decisive action" by the United Nations Security Council to ensure that Iraq abandons its strategy of "delay, evasion and noncompliance" with all relevant international resolutions.

(2) Force As Last Resort. The Bush administration and our allies must exhaust all diplomatic efforts before resorting to armed force in Iraq. The resolution provides that President Bush must certify to Congress, before any military strike, if feasible, or within 48 hours of a U.S. attack, that diplomatic and other peaceful means alone are inadequate to protect Americans from Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. If America must go to war against a regime that threatens our lives, it will not

happen until all other possible solutions have been exhausted.

(3) Congressional Oversight. In addition to the certification to Congress before a military strike, this resolution requires President Bush to report to Congress every 60 days on "matters relevant" to the confrontation with Iraq.

(4) Retaining American Sovereignty. While the resolution authorizes the United States to work through a U.N. Security Council resolution, no American sovereignty is forfeited. If all efforts fail and the national security of the United States is under direct threat by Iraq, the resolution authorizes the President to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines "necessary and proper" in order to defend America.

God Bless America!

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I am committed to the war against terrorism, and believe that stopping Saddam Hussein from developing weapons of mass destruction is a necessary part of that effort. At this time, however, I believe it is premature to authorize a unilateral attack on Iraq.

Working with the international community is the surest means of addressing this threat effectively, sharing costs and resources, and ensuring stability in Iraq and throughout the Middle East in the event of a regime change. While the President has spoken of the value of a coalition effort, the resolution before the House today undermines the importance of our allies and of maintaining the momentum of international cooperation in the wider war on terrorism.

I support the Spratt amendment to the resolution. This amendment would authorize the use of U.S. forces in support of a new U.N. Security Council resolution mandating the elimination, by force if necessary, of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and means of producing such weapons. Should the Security Council fail to produce such a resolution, the amendment calls on the President to then seek authorization for unilateral military action. In this way, the amendment emphasizes our preference for a peaceful solution and coalition support while recognizing that military force and unilateral action may be appropriate at some point.

We should not rush into war without the support of our allies. We should not send American troops into combat before making a good faith effort to put U.N. inspectors back into Iraq, under a more forceful resolution. We should not turn to a policy of preemptive attack, which we have so long and so rightly condemned, without first providing a limited-time option for peaceful resolution of the threat. America has long stood behind the principle of exhausting diplomacy before resorting to war, and at times like this we must lead by example.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.J. Res. 114, a resolution granting President Bush the authorization to use military force against Iraq. Never in my 8 years as a Member of Congress has there been a vote with as far reaching consequences as this one.

I am under no illusions. War is a serious matter with the real possibility of casualties. I have given this decision a great deal of thought, have sought wise counsel and have spent much time in prayer. It is with a heavy heart that I have come to the conclusion that military action against Iraq may be our only option.